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BETTERTON POST OFFICE

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PROPOSAL TO CLOSE
THE SUSPENDED STILL POND, MD POST OFFICE
AND CONTINUE TO PROVIDE
SERVICE BY RURAL ROUTE SERVICE

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I. RESPONSIVENESS TO COMMUNITY POSTAL NEEDS

The Postal Service is proposing to close the Still Pond, MD Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Worton Post Office, located five miles away.

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster was reassigned on September 28, 2010. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue.

The office is being studied for possible closing or consolidation due to the following reasons: On September 28th 2010, the rented structure that housed Still Pond Post Office suffered major fire damage. This facility was closed and recently I was notified by the owner that they had no intentions to rebuild this structure.

The Still Pond Post Office, an EAS-11 level, is currently suspended and services have been moved to another facility since 09/28/2010.

The retail window averaged zero transaction(s) accounting for zero minute(s) of retail workload daily. With minimal workload, the Postal Service feels that effective and regular service will be provided by rural route service. Office receipts for the last 3 years were: \$41,112 (107 revenue units) in FY 2008; \$42,370 (111 revenue units) in FY 2009; and \$39,163 (102 revenue units) in FY 2010. There were no permit mailer(s) or postage meter customer(s).

Since the suspension of service, customers have received delivery and retail services by rural route service emanating from the Worton Post Office, an EAS-16 level office located 5.2 miles away. Window service hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Saturday. There are 81 Post Office boxes available.

On April 28, 2011, representatives from the Postal Service were available at the Still Pond United Methodist Church 12801 Still Pond Rd. to answer questions and provide information to customers. 61 customer(s) attended the meeting.

On April 12, 2011, 184 questionnaires were distributed to delivery customers of the Still Pond Post Office. Questionnaires were also available over the counter for retail customers at the Worton Post Office. 64 questionnaires were returned. Responses regarding the proposed alternate service were as follows: 6 favorable, 31 unfavorable, and 27 expressed no opinion.

A petition supporting the retention of the Still Pond Post Office was received on March 01, 2011, with 105 signatures.

Retail service is also available at the Betterton Post Office an EAS-11 level office, located three miles away. Window service hours at Betterton Post Office are from 7:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. & 1:00 p.m. to 4:15 p.m., Monday through Friday and 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on Saturday. There are 222 post office boxes available for rent.

The following concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, from customer letters, on the petition, and from the congressional inquiry:

1. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about leaving mail in the mailbox.

Response: The customer also expressed a concern about leaving mail in the mailbox. A questionnaire was sent to the postal inspection service concerning mail theft and vandalism in the suspended Post Office area. Their records indicate that there has not been any report of mail theft or vandalism in the area. However, customers may place a note in their mailboxes instructing the carrier to sound their horn when they arrive, in order to transact financial business.
2. **Concern:** Customer expressed a concern about mailbox vandalism.

Response: A questionnaire was sent to the postal inspection service concerning mail theft and vandalism in the suspended Post Office area. Their records indicate that there has not been any report of mail theft or vandalism in the area. However, customers may place a note in their mailboxes instructing the carrier to sound their horn when they arrive, in order to transact financial business.
3. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity

Response: The customer expressed a concern about the loss of the Communities' identity. A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the suspended Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory.

Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity. You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service. Customers expressed concern over the apparent lack of interest by the Postal Service for the needs of the community. Customers felt the post office should remain open since they paid taxes.
4. **Concern:**

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the loss of the Communities' identity. A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the suspended Post Office name and ZIP Code in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory. You expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience. You expressed a concern that the Postal Service exhibits a lack of interest in the mailing needs of the community. The Postal Service is required to provide each community with regular and effective service, using the most cost efficient means possible. The proposed alternate delivery service will meet the mailing and service needs of the community in a more cost effective manner. You expressed a concern that since the people of your community paid taxes the post office should remain open. The Postal Service is not supported by tax dollars and must meet expenses by revenue it generates. Operational savings for the Postal Service contributes in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.

5. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to Worton Post Office to pick up their mail

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the administrative postmaster.

6. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to Worton Post Office to pick up their mail

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the Worton Post Office postmaster.

7. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to Worton Post Office to pick up their mail. You expressed a concern that they requested and were denied rural delivery service

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the administrative postmaster. You expressed a concern that you requested and were denied rural delivery service. There are several guidelines which must be met prior to a road being approved for delivery. The road to be traveled must be at least 14 feet wide and maintained at all times of the year. It cannot dead end in a private driveway even if the drive is maintained by a municipality. There must be a suitable turning point provided for the carrier, preferably with no backing. If backing is involved, there are other guidelines to adhere to. If backing is necessitated, the Postmaster must verify it is in a low-traffic area and there are no children in the immediate vicinity on a regular basis.

There must also be a minimum of one family per one-half mile of travel.

8. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service

Response:

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route service. Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.

9. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service. Customer concerned about kids destroying mailboxes.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route service. Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.

10. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service. Customer expressed a concern about the inability of the rural carrier to weigh and rate letters and packages.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route service. Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day. You expressed a concern about the inability of the rural carrier to weigh and rate letters and packages. The rural carrier will accept any letters or packages for mailing. The carrier will estimate the cost and provide a receipt for any money received. On the following delivery day the carrier will provide change or a bill for the amount over the estimate.

11. **Concern:**

Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service. Customers were concerned about mail security

Response:

The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route service. Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day. You expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

12. **Concern:** Customers expressed concern over the dependability of rural route service. Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the Still Pond Post Office.
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern over the dependability of rural route service. Rural letter carriers perform a vital function in the United States Postal Service serving thousands of families and businesses in rural and suburban areas while traveling millions of miles daily. Rural letter carriers are highly respected by the American public. This respect has been earned by many years of dedication to the Postal Service and to postal customers. During national and local emergencies, including prolonged periods of extreme weather conditions, rural carriers have demonstrated great responsibility in providing mail service to postal customers. Rural carriers are required to serve the route expeditiously and arrive at boxes at about the same time each day.
13. **Concern:** Customers felt the loss of a post office would have a detrimental effect on the business community
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about the detrimental effect the loss of the post office would have on the community. Businesses generally require regular and effective postal services, and these will always be provided to the suspended Post Office community. There is no indication that the business community will be adversely affected. Questionnaire responses revealed that customers will continue to use local businesses if the post office is discontinued.
14. **Concern:** Customers inquired about building a new facility or a mobile unit
- Response:** The customer inquired about building a new facility or a mobile unit. New construction or the placement of a mobile unit or trailer is not feasible when regular and effective service can be provided by more cost-effective alternatives, such as rural delivery.
15. **Concern:** Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the Still Pond Post Office.
- Response:** Courteous and helpful service will be provided by personnel at the Worton Post Office and from the carrier. Special assistance will be provided as needed.
16. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to make an address change on their bank checks and stationery
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about an address change. Customers that erect a rural mailbox along the carrier's line of travel will be assigned a 911 address. Customers can continue to use the community name, Still Pond, in the last line of the address, however, in order to insure regular and effective service the Zip Code will change to adminzip.
17. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.
18. **Concern:** Customers were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service. Customers expressed concern for loss of community identity.
- Response:** The customer expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience. You expressed a concern about the loss of the Communities' identity. A community's identity derives from the interest and vitality of its residents and their use of its name. The Postal Service is helping to preserve community identity by continuing the use of the Still

Pond Post Office, 21667 in addresses and in the National Five-Digit ZIP Code and Post Office Directory

19. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service. Customers expressed concern for those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the Worton Post Office to pick up their mail.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer. You expressed a concern about those customers with disabilities who are not able to go to the post office to pick up their mail. Customers are not required to travel to another post office to receive mail or obtain retail services. These services will be provided by the carrier to a roadside mailbox located close to customers' residences. In hardship cases, delivery can be made to the home of a customer. Changes in the type of delivery are considered where service by existing methods would impose an extreme physical hardship for an individual customer. Any request for a change in delivery method must be submitted in writing to the Worton Post Office postmaster.

20. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about mail security

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

21. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about mail security.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

22. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about mail security. Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the Still Pond Post Office.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

23. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about mail security. You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose. You expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.

24. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about mail security. Customers said they would miss the special attention and assistance provided by the personnel at the Still Pond Post Office.

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

25. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about obtaining services from the carrier.
Customers were concerned about mail security.

Response:

The customer were concerned about obtaining services from the carrier, retail services provided at the post office are available from the carrier. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience. Listed below are some services available from the carrier and how to obtain them.

PURCHASING STAMPS BY MAIL

The Stamps by Mail Program provides customers the opportunity to purchase stamps, envelopes, and postal cards by using Form 3227-R, Stamp Purchase Order (Rural), available from the post office or the carrier. Commemorative stamps and stamp collecting products are also available. The customer addresses the postage paid order form envelope, encloses payment by personal check or postal money order made payable to the US Postal Service, and mails the form (postage-free) or leaves it in the mailbox for the carrier to pick up. Most orders are processed overnight, and some immediately.

PURCHASING POSTAL MONEY ORDERS

Customers may purchase money orders by meeting the carrier at the mailbox, completing an application, and paying the carrier (in cash) the price of the money order, plus the fee. The carrier gives the customer a receipt for the application. The money order is completed when the carrier returns to the post office, and a money order receipt is left in the customer's mailbox on the next delivery day. Most customers provide the carrier with a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which the completed money order is mailed to its destination. If customers prefer, the completed money orders will be returned for verification on the next delivery day.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Special services such as certified, registered, Express Mail, delivery confirmation, signature confirmation, and COD may be obtained from the carrier by leaving a note in the mailbox, along with the appropriate payment. The carrier will provide the services that day and leave a customer receipt in the mailbox on the next delivery day.

HOLDING MAIL

Customers who will be away for an extended time, such as a vacation, may request that their mail be held at the post office during their absence. Upon return the customer asks the post office to resume delivery. You expressed a concern about the security of mail. Customers may place a lock on their mailboxes. The mailbox must have a slot large enough to accommodate the customer's normal daily mail volume. The Postal Service does not open mailboxes which are locked and does not accept keys for this purpose.

26. **Concern:**

Customers were concerned about the limited hours of operation at the post office

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the limited hours of operation at the post office. Postmaster level and office service hours are determined by a workload analysis which includes the number of deliveries and revenue.

27. **Concern:**

You felt the community should have a post office and wanted a new facility provided

Response:

The customer expressed a concern about the Postal Services' search for alternate quarters. No suitable quarters are available in the community to house an independent post office. A new lease would require a building which meets federal guidelines. A postal facility is not constructed when effective and regular service can be provided by a more cost-effective alternate service.

28. **Concern:**

You were concerned about having to travel to another post office for service

Response: The customer expressed a concern about having to travel to another post office for service. Services provided at the post office will be available from the carrier, and customers will not have to travel to another post office for service. Most transactions do not require meeting the carrier at the mailbox. Stamps by Mail and Money Order Application forms are available for customer convenience.

29. **Concern:** Any thoughts about Still Pond being open 4 hours instead of 8?

Response: I will review this possibility, and comment noted.

30. **Concern:** Are you actively looking for some place in Still Pond to locate the post office? What economic sense does it make to close the post office? What is the study? We can another site, please answer.

Response: No, we are not looking for another site at this time. The Postal Service looks to see if it can provide economic and efficient service by other means of delivery before considering re-opening. The study is a review of both delivery and retail operations regarding the office in question.

31. **Concern:** Can I have a mailbox on Main Street?

Response: That may be possible, depending on the line of travel or rural delivery: every attempt will be made to provide convenient rural service.

32. **Concern:** Can we have our post office back if space was provided? How stringent are the regulations, what are the specifications?

Response: I am not sure at this time. Building specifications fall under OSHA, and i will get you a name or number for building specifications.

33. **Concern:** Can we still keep Still Pond Zip Code? The town of Lynch lost theirs, what happened? At next meeting, can district manager be scheduled? Possible combination of Betterton and Still Pond. Has anybody review the real estate property in the area?

Response: Still Pond post office Zip Code will remain active, and i have no information on why Lynch lost their Zip Code. I will take this information back to the Baltimore district. Postal real estate division did send out proposals to Still Pond and Betterton area. No viable finance.

34. **Concern:** Can you give us some idea of how long this process takes to resolve?

Response: I am unable to answer this question as we move through this process.

35. **Concern:** Can you provide information on profitability on Still Pond?

Response: Not at this time

36. **Concern:** Comment: Consider Graham's proposal

Response: Comment noted

37. **Concern:** Comment: The post office is part of the fabric of the rural community

Response: Comment noted

38. **Concern:** Could Betterton be a 24 hour facility with an access to PO Box?

Response: It's possible, but I will review security of facility.

39. **Concern:** Did the survey ask if we wanted the post office closed, exactly?

Response: Please review survey. Questions as stated.

40. **Concern:** Do postmasters have a union? What is the organization position on closing post offices? Do they take into consideration that a post office is profitable?

Response: The postmasters do not have a union, they have an organization. The postmaster's LEAGUE and NAPUS review each study regarding closures. It does not matter if a post office is profitable or non-profitable.

41. **Concern:** Do you have a disaster plan for Still Pond post office?
- Response:** Yes, to move to the largest, nearest postal facility. Worton MD
42. **Concern:** Do you have the revenue numbers for Still Pond? Is this possibly the last meeting? I received no notice at all. Comment: Want another meeting at Still Pond at Methodist Church with all the info.
- Response:** No revenue numbers. Yes, this is possibly the last meeting.
43. **Concern:** Graham, a Still Pond resident has offered his building at the same cost as what the post office was already paying.
- Response:** Facility needs to meet OSHA requirements to be postalized, and currently we are under a building moratorium. We, USPS, have no funds available for construction or improvements.
44. **Concern:** Has the decision been made already to close Still Pond?
- Response:** No, this is a study only.
45. **Concern:** How do you provide security if a box isn't on the same street you live?
- Response:** USPS does not provide security on any rural boxes. Check with local postmaster before erecting mail box. There are many different types of secure rural mail boxes available.
46. **Concern:** How is a comparable service if my mail box is two streets over?
- Response:** No difference. Not all rural boxes are located on everyone's personal property. Delivery lines of travel requirements are necessary.
47. **Concern:** How many PO Boxes and rural delivery in Still Pond?
- Response:** 96 PO Boxes and 120 rural deliveries.
48. **Concern:** How proactive was USPS in finding another facility? No communication in five months until the survey came. Did Neavitt provide facility?
- Response:** Yes, they provided a facility, land and cluster boxes. They receive rural delivery.
49. **Concern:** How would you expect us to wait for the carrier when we have a certified letter?
- Response:** Carrier leaves notification for customer to return to local post office requesting redelivery. Carrier will come to door for signature as long as you are not more than half a mile off travel line.
50. **Concern:** I live 16-18 miles round trip to Worton, is that the Baltimore policy to leave packages and money at your box?
- Response:** Rural carriers conduct retail business and are known as post office on wheels.
51. **Concern:** I sent post cards on my own dime to Still Pond residents. Phil Ventura has no awareness of the letter dated 3/4/11 with his name on it. Don't understand why so many residents didn't get letters.
- Response:** I refunded your postage for all post cards sent. I will contact Mr. Ventura regarding the 3/4/11 letter. I will contact Operations Support regarding distribution of letters.
52. **Concern:** If community able to demonstrate, does the post office have to provide a service? Who decides efficient delivery?
- Response:** The Postal Service will provide delivery and retail services. The postal study and headquarters will make the final decision.
53. **Concern:** If old property is brought back on line, would that make a difference? What is impact from survey from back in February?

Response:

At this time, I do not have an answer regarding Still Pond coming back online. 64 surveys were submitted and will be used in the final determinations. Surveys can still be submitted.

54. **Concern:**

If the store is bought and rehabbed, does post office have to re-postalize the facility? Do you weigh in with your opinion, will you share with us?

Response:

The builder must postalize and meet OSHA requirements regarding new construction. I do comment on Still Pond concerns.

55. **Concern:**

I'm offering space at the same rent. Who makes the decisions and who provide application to provide building?

Response:

Headquarters makes the decision and local government

56. **Concern:**

Is Still Pond Post Office profitable?

Response:

No

57. **Concern:**

Is the customer the center of the post office effort?

Response:

Part of this review process.

58. **Concern:**

Is there a trailer in Betterton? Could we have one in Still Pond as a temporary solution? Where did the trailer come from in Betterton? Was it provided by the post office? Why can't we have a trailer in Still Pond? Who ultimately make the decision regarding Still Pond?

Response:

There is a trailer in Betterton and we do not have another trailer to place in Still Pond. The trailer belongs to the U.S.P.S. and was provided by the U.S.P.S. We no longer maintain trailers in our postal inventory. Headquarters makes the final decision on closures or suspensions.

59. **Concern:**

Is this meeting considered official to close the Still Pond post office? Are there other post offices less profitable than Still Pond? What is the criteria used to close post office and what other alternatives. Retail Outlets? Give names of people in the post office to address in regards to this issue.

Response:

This is an official meeting. I do not have that information at this time. The criteria used in this study is whether or not we can provide efficient delivery and retain operations to the customers in Still Pond. The contract postal facility would be one of the alternatives. A contract postal facility is a retail outlet.

60. **Concern:**

Is this study site specific to Still Pond? Do we rate as profitable or non profitable? Who will make the decision, and what is his name in headquarters?

Response:

Site specific to Still Pond, Yes. The office does not turn a profit. I do not have the name of the person who makes this decision, but I will get you his name.

61. **Concern:**

More people are here tonight than last meeting, should show Post Office that town wants Post Office.

Response:

This is a study and all comments will be put in the official record.

62. **Concern:**

Parking at Worton is terrible. Contact name of someone in real estate division.

Response:

At this time there is no striped parking. It is a leased facility. I will look into getting this corrected. I have no information, but will get you a name and number

63. **Concern:**

Present director of homeland security proved contingency. Does this act pertain to the post office?

Response:

The Postal Service has COOP, which means Contingency of Operations Program. Our plan was to move to Worton Post Office.

64. **Concern:**

Resident also feels slighted because she didn't know of a meeting in the 1st

- Response:** That is why this meeting is being held.
65. **Concern:** Resident feels slighted because she has 2 PO boxes and did not get a survey.
- Response:** Surveys were delivered full coverage of all box holders.
66. **Concern:** Some people still have not been given the survey.
- Response:** All surveys were delivered to full coverage of both post office boxes and rural customers.
67. **Concern:** Still Pond post office is on a historical register. Do you set up meetings where they cannot be videotaped or photographed? Ask commissioner Raisin to have meeting open to photographer and video graphing. Did you ask former postmaster about a meeting place? Graham Ero offered space for next meeting.
- Response:** I am aware that Still Pond is on historical registry. The Chestertown Post Office was chosen because I do not have a budget for meeting places. I did not ask the postmaster for meeting locations.
68. **Concern:** This continuance or CPU, do the alternatives come before discontinuance?
- Response:** This is a study of the Still Pond post office.
69. **Concern:** This is a huge inconvenience to expect us to just wait for the carrier.
- Response:** Item can be picked up at the Worton Post Office.
70. **Concern:** Was Still Pond on the list for closing before the fire? Service happened before fire, why can't we have it now? What situation closes a post office? What is the policy called?
- Response:** No, it was not on the list before fire. This is a study to see if we should reinstate service. The trigger for this study was the fire, and the policy is discontinuance.
71. **Concern:** We have 5 or 6 business in Still Pond, another good reason to keep post office.
- Response:** Noted
72. **Concern:** We will not get the same service at Chestertown or Worton that we got at Still Pond.
- Response:** Worton Post Office is a full service office.
73. **Concern:** What is the criteria for closing a Post Office?
- Response:** The criteria is as listed on the presentation shown.
74. **Concern:** What was the lease plan? Do we have another facility to cover the disaster? Do you have in writing another building in Still Pond? Why did we not receive notification about this meeting?
- Response:** No lease plan. No other plan other than to move to Worton Post Office. District emergency plan of record is to occupy Worton post office. Notification was sent by Baltimore district officials.
75. **Concern:** When will the survey be completed?
- Response:** Unsure of exact date.
76. **Concern:** When will we know if Still Pond will be closed?
- Response:** A review process is listed showing periods of time in which this study progresses. Discontinuance process was explained in slide show.
77. **Concern:** Why was commitment to community not given after fire to provide service?

Response: A postal operation was moved to Worton post office the next day.

78. **Concern:** Why was survey sent out months after the post office closed?

Response: A decision was made to conduct a study to review feasibility of a possible discontinuance.

79. **Concern:** Why was Worton Post Office chosen?

Response: It was the largest and closest office to Still Pond.

80. **Concern:** Will any more surveys come out?

Response: No further surveys will be distributed.

81. **Concern:** Would we have the same Zip Code?

Response: Yes.

Some advantages of the proposal are:

1. The rural or contract delivery carrier may provide retail services, alleviating the need to go to the post office. Stamps by Mail order forms are provided for customer convenience.
2. Customers opting for carrier service will have 24-hour access to their mail.
3. Savings for the Postal Service contribute in the long run to stable postage rates and savings for customers.
4. CBUs can offer the security of individually locked mail compartments. Parcel lockers provide convenient parcel delivery for customers.
5. Customers opting for carrier service will not have to pay post office box fees.
6. Saves time and energy for customers who drive to the post office to pick up mail.

Some disadvantages of the proposal are:

1. The loss of a retail outlet and a postmaster position in the community. Retail services may be provided by the rural or contract delivery carrier.
2. Meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier at the box to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions.
3. A change in the mailing address. The community name will continue to be used in the new address. A carrier route address will be assigned.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service concludes this proposal will provide a maximum degree of effective and regular postal services to the community.

II. EFFECT ON COMMUNITY

Still Pond is an unincorporated community located in Kent County. The community is administered politically by Kent County Gov't. Police protection is provided by the Kent County Sheriff's Dept.. Fire protection is provided by the Betterton VFD. The community is comprised of Basically a small rural community with all types of homeowners which is listed above. There are some farmers, retirees, and commuters who reside in Still Pond. , and those who commute to work at nearby communities and work in local businesses.

Businesses and organizations include: Still Pond United Meth Church PO Box 1 , Dorsey Bus Service PO Box 13, Handyman Contractors PO Box 15, Syrta's PO Box 18, Loblolly Productions PO Box 20, Ero Wooden Boats PO Box 27, CRS PO Box 37, Bayside Insurance Assoc. PO Box 41, Still Pond Advisors PO Box 50, Shorter's S&S Automotive PO Box 63, Fox Customs PO Box 64, Still Pond Woodworks PO Box 65, Uncle Jim's Painting PO Box 71, Sll Investments PO Box 80, Sassi Pottery PO Box 83, SS&E Painting & Floors PO Box 88, Speakman's PO Box 95, Transportation Safety Consultant PO Box 109, S&M Unlimited PO Box 111, Rainbow Connection PO Box 119, . Residents may travel to nearby communities for other supplies and services.

Nonpostal services provided at the Still Pond Post Office will be available at the Worton Post Office. Government forms normally provided by the Post Office will also be available at the Worton Post Office or by contacting your local government agency.

The following nonpostal concerns were expressed from questionnaires, the community meeting, on the petition, and on the congressional inquiry:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. Concern: | Does it make sense to hire another carrier to handle all the customers that will put up boxes. |
| Response: | We will be required to hire another carrier. |
| 2. Concern: | Is this meeting being held to pacify residents? |
| Response: | Meeting held upon your request. |
| 3. Concern: | Post office is where we share stories of what is going on in the community. |
| Response: | Comment noted. |
| 4. Concern: | Resident has a disabled daughter that goes to the post office every single day and now she has no where to go. |
| Response: | Rural delivery will bring the mail to your home address. |
| 5. Concern: | Resident knows how to save Post Office money, get rid of your job. |
| Response: | Comment noted |
| 6. Concern: | Socialization keeps the post office functioning. |

- Response:** Comment noted.
7. **Concern:** Still Pond is the fabric of our community: community centers around Post Office.
- Response:** Understood and will be recorded.
8. **Concern:** The fire was devastating to our community and the post office is taking advantage of this community.
- Response:** Comment noted.
9. **Concern:** The survey that went out, how was it worded?
- Response:** Self explanatory.
10. **Concern:** What is your opinion personally on if Still Pond should be closed?
- Response:** I am here today to get the community concerns and take them back and share them with postal officials.

Based on information the Postal Service obtained, it was determined that there has been minimal growth in the area in recent years, rural route service is expected to be able to handle any future growth in the community.

III. EFFECT ON EMPLOYEES

The postmaster position became vacant when the postmaster was reassigned on September 28, 2010. The noncareer postmaster relief (PMR) may be separated from the Postal Service. No other Postal Service employee will be adversely affected.

IV. ECONOMIC SAVINGS

The Postal Service estimates an annual savings of \$ 38,694 with a breakdown as follows:

Postmaster Salary (EAS-11, No COLA)	\$ 33,168
Fringe Benefits @ 33.5%	\$ 11,111
Annual Lease Costs	<u>+ \$ 4,290</u>
Total Annual Costs	\$ 48,569
Less Annual Cost of Replacement Service	<u>- \$ 9,875</u>
Total Annual Savings	<u>\$ 38,694</u>

V. OTHER FACTORS

The Postal Service has identified no other factors for consideration.

VI. SUMMARY

The Postal Service is proposing to close the Still Pond, MD Post Office and provide delivery and retail services by rural route service under the administrative responsibility of the Worton Post Office, located five miles away.

Operations were suspended on September 28, 2010, due to Smoke and water damage due to fire in store next door.. There were no suitable alternate quarters available.

The postmaster was reassigned on September 28, 2010. If the office has a noncareer PMR(s), they may be separated from the Postal Service; however, attempts will be made to reassign the employee(s) to a nearby facility. No other employee(s) will be adversely affected. Post office workload has declined. Effective and regular service will continue to be provided by rural route service.

The Still Pond Post Office provided delivery and retail service to 109 PO Box or general delivery customers and 75 delivery route customers. The daily retail window transactions averaged zero. There are no permit mailers or postage meter customers.

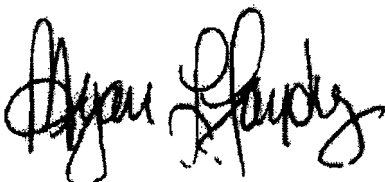
There will no longer be a retail outlet in the community. However, delivery and retail services may be available from a rural or contract delivery carrier, which could alleviate the need to travel to a post office for service. The Postal Service will save an estimated \$38,694 annually. A disadvantage to some may be in meeting the rural or contract delivery carrier to transact business. However, it is not necessary to be present to conduct most Postal Service transactions with a rural or contract delivery carrier.

Taking all available information into consideration, the Postal Service has determined that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages and this proposal is warranted.

VII. NOTICES

- A. Support Materials. Copies of all materials upon which this proposal is based are available for public inspection at the Worton Post Office and Betterton Post Office during normal office hours.
- B. This is a proposal. It is not a final determination to close this post office. If a final determination is made to close this post office, after public comments on this proposal are received and taken into account, a notice of that final determination will be posted in this office.

The final determination will contain instructions on how affected customers may appeal that decision to the Postal Regulatory Commission. Any such appeal must be received by the commission within 30 days of the posting of the final determination.



BRYAN LANDRY
Manager, Post Office Operations

06/30/2011
Date